SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF PARENTS WITH MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

RESEARCH ABSTRACT

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TITLE OF THE THESIS : SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF PARENTS WITH MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

The purpose of this research was to find out the social problems faced by the parents of Mentally Retarded children in various dimensions and to suggest the available social support systems which maximize their social integration. For this purpose 550 samples were collected from 8 special schools for Mentally Retarded children in Chennai. A Questionnaire in TAMIL language which consists of 170 questions under 2 major sections was used to collect required data. The sample includes parents of children with Mental Retardation within the age group of 4-18 years. Out of which 292 are fathers and 258 are mothers. The collected data are summarized and analyzed statistically by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS.)

The findings of this study revealed that parents of Mentally Retarded children have various kinds of problems in their daily routine, within the family, health problems, in their job, problems in educating their Mentally Retarded Child, financial problems and in the society they live in. There is a significant difference between father’s and mother’s problems. Age group, Gender and Level of Retardation of the Mentally Retarded children have significant effect on the level of social problems of the parents. Income, Occupation and Education of the parents have an effect on social problems faced by them.

There is a significant difference between fathers and mothers, high and low income group of parents, and urban and rural living parents about the awareness of Governmental and Non-Governmental help.

In the light of these findings, Governmental and Non-Governmental organizations were suggested to conduct Awareness programs about “Mental Retardation” and the helps available to the Mentally Retarded children and their parents. Suitable preventive measures to be taken by the parents and general public are recommended.